

Message Text

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SUBJECT: ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN AMERICAN COLLEGE THEATER
FESTIVAL AND SMITHSONIAN FOLK FESTIVAL

REF: BUCHAREST 6259; STATE 000160

1. SUMMARY. AMBASSADOR TOOK ADVANTAGE OF CALL ON COUNCIL OF SOCIALIST CULTURE AND EDUCATION PRESIDENT POPESCU AND PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU'S NEW YEAR RECEPTION TO RAISE QUESTIONS OF ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN SUBJECT PROGRAMS. POPESCU SAID HE WAS ALL IN FAVOR BUT HAD NO MONEY TO PAY TRANSPORTATION COSTS. PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU ON THE OTHER HAND PROMISED THAT ROMANIAN AIRLINES WOULD HANDLE INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION. EMBASSY WILL FOLLOW UP. END SUMMARY

2. IN DECEMBER 29 CONVERSATION, POPESCU MAINTAINED THAT COUNCIL'S BUDGET DID NOT AND HAD NEVER CONTAINED ANY FUNDS FOR PAYING INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION OF ROMANIAN PERFORMING ARTS GROUPS. SUCH TRAVEL AS DID TAKE PLACE WAS ALWAYS DONE ON AN IMPRESARIO BASIS ALTHOUGH AT TIMES, HE ACKNOWLEDGED, ROMANIAN IMPRESARIO ORGANIZATION ARIA WAS INSTRUCTED NOT TO MAKE ANY MONEY ON THE PARTICULAR ATTRACTION BUT ONLY ENOUGH TO COVER EXPENSES. HESAID HE WAS ALL IN FAVOR OF THE BULANDRA PARTICIPATING IN THE ACT FESTIVAL AND SO FAR AS HE WAS CONCERNED THEY COULD PERFORM ANYTHING THE AMERICAN ORGANIZERS WANTED. HE THOUGHT CIULEI'S LATEST PRODUCTION OF GORKI'S "LOWER DEPTHS," AS A MATTER OF FACT, WOULD BE A GOOD ADDITION. THE FARTHEST POPESCU WOULD GO WAS TO SAY HE WOULD GIVE INSTRUCTIONS TO ARIA TO MAKE INTENSIVE EFFORTS TO FIND

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AN AMERICAN IMPRESARIO TO ARRANGE A COMMERCIAL TOUR FOR THE

BULANDRA WHICH COULD COVER INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORTATION EXPENSES. LIKEWISE, HE WAS IN FAVOR OF ROMANIAN PARTICIPATION IN SMITHSONIAN FOLKLORE FESTIVAL AND ENDORSED THE PAO'S EFFORTS TO GET MINISTRY OF TOURISM FINANCIAL SPONSORSHIP. AMBASSADOR TOLD POPESCU THAT IN VIEW OF POPESCU'S GLOOMY FINANCIAL PROSPECTS, HE WAS TEMPTED TO USE OCCASION FOLLOWING DAY AT PRESIDENTIAL NEW YEAR RECEPTION TO ASK PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU IF HE COULD HELP. POPESCU SAID HE HAD NO OBJECTION BUT WAS DOUBTFUL WHETHER THE PRESIDENT WOULD DO ANYTHING.

3. AMBASSADOR ASKED PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU IF HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO INTERVENE IN ROMANIAN INTERNAL AFFAIRS BY GETTING POPESCU AND GENERAL IONITA (MINISTER OF DEFENSE UNDER WHOSE MINISTRY ROMANIAN AIRLINE TAROM COMES) TOGETHER SO TAROM COULD PROVIDE TRANSPORTATION FOR THEATER AND FOLKLORE GROUPS TO PARTICIPATE IN US BICENTENNIAL YEAR PROGRAMS, SEEING AS HOW POPESCU HAD NO MONEY. PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU RESPONDED THAT HE WAS VERY INTERESTED IN HAVING ROMANIAN CULTURAL GROUPS PRESENT IN THE UNITED STATES DURING 1976 AND THAT "WE WOULD USE OUR PLANES TO TRANSPORT THEM."

4. WE WILL FOLLOW UP WITH THE VARIOUS ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED ON PRESIDENT CEAUSESCU'S ASSURANCES. MEANWHILE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT INFORMING BOTH DAVID YOUNG OF ACTF AND RALPH RINGLER OF SMITHSONIAN THAT THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME HOPE AGAIN FOR BOTH PROGRAMS. IN THE MEANWHILE WOULD APPRECIATE A READING FROM DAVID YOUNG AS TO HOW HE IS MANAGING HIS OWN FINANCIAL PROBLEMS (RE AMBASSADOR'S DISCUSSION WITH GUY CORIDEN) AS WELL AS ANY IDEAS HE AND CU MIGHT HAVE FOR PUTTING ARIA EXPEDITIOUSLY IN TOUCH WITH AMERICAN IMPRESARIOS JUST IN CASE ON THE BULANDRA MATTER.
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